

ILLINOIS, A GREAT CATCH FOR THE ULTIMATE FISHING EXPERIENCE
Get hooked on one of the fastest growing American pastimes this summer in Illinois

CHICAGO (June 2000) - Chicago may have been the home of the **30th Annual B.A.S.S. Masters Classic** this summer, but, the fish are biting all over the state and this is the perfect time to cast a line.

Illinois' rivers, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, creeks and streams are stocked each year with more than 50 million fish of various species. Hybrid stripers, largemouthed and small-mouthed bass, catchable trout, and dozens of other fish are swimming throughout the state.

Fishing's popularity has increased substantially in the last few years in the U.S., and it is estimated that anglers currently outnumber golfers. This is partially because fishing is being rediscovered by families looking for activities that appeal to various ages.

"Fishing is one of the top activities enjoyed by families traveling in Illinois, primarily because it can be enjoyed by people of all ages. For example, grandparents can bond with their grandchildren during a fishing trip. It's a weekend adventure that everybody can enjoy in Illinois," said Cathy Ritter, state tourism director.

Bass anglers in particular account for half of U.S. fishers, and they are lauded by environmentalists for their catch-and-release policy. The B.A.S.S. Masters Classic, this year held in Chicago, is the biggest event of the year in this \$60-billion-a-year industry.

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FISHING DESTINATIONS IN ILLINOIS

Illinois' fishing destinations are chock full of fish waiting to take the bait. Whether anglers want walleye or catfish, fishing locations throughout the state can deliver. Please call ahead to find out the specific regulations at each Illinois waterway.

NORTHERN

The **Heidecke State Fish and Wildlife Area** in Northern Illinois is known for its walleye, hybrid and striped bass and is surrounded by 1,800 acres of land. *815/942-6352*

Kankakee means "beautiful river" in the Pottawatomi language, which perfectly describes **Kankakee River State Park** in Bourbonnais. Rent a canoe for the day and enjoy the waters. Areas of the Kankakee River are great for fly-fishing as well. *800/74-RIVER*

Starved Rock State Park in Utica will provide many days of quality fishing. Rent a canoe or motorboat and fish near glacier-carved canyons for catfish, bullhead, white bass, sauger, walleye, carp and crappie. Explore the bluffs and canyons throughout 13 miles of well-marked trails. Starved Rock has an on-site lodge and campground in addition, to many nearby hotels and B&Bs. *815/667-4626*

CENTRAL

At **Lake Shelbyville Fish and Wildlife Management Area**, experience fishing along the Kaskaskia and West Okaw Rivers near Sullivan. These rivers provide excellent stream fishing for walleye, white bass, crappie and channel catfish. *800/874-3529*

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Anglers enjoy **Kickapoo State Park** in Oakwood because it provides excellent fishing for largemouth and smallmouth bass, channel catfish, bluegill, crappie and red-ear sunfish. The spring and fall stockings of rainbow trout are also popular among anglers. In addition, discover the numerous hiking trails, as well as the nature trails. Pitch a tent and stay the night at the on-site campgrounds complete with amenities. *217/442-4915*

WESTERN

The **Ray Norbut Fish and Wildlife Area** lies against the Illinois River and allows bank fishing along the Illinois river and Blue Creek. Anglers can catch bass, bluegill, catfish and crappie in these waters. Overnight accommodations can be made in nearby Quincy at one of the many hotels, B&Bs or campgrounds. *217/833-2811*

The line will be bobbing at **Sanganois Fish and Wildlife Area**. Large numbers of carp, buffalo fish, catfish and bullhead are caught and sold here annually. During the summer and fall fishers can try their hand at the bass, crappie and bluegill. Weekend accommodations are available in Springfield at one of the many hotels and B&Bs. *309/546-2628*

SOUTHERN

A vast array of fish can be found at **Horseshoe Lake** in Miller City. The lake is stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, sunfish, catfish, bullhead, carp and yellow bass. Spend the night camping at Horseshoe Lake or nearby at Goodbread's Lost Acres. *618/776-5689*

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Rend Lake is the second largest man-made lake in Illinois. Although this is a shallow reservoir, there is an abundant supply of crappie, channel catfish, hybrid striped bass and flathead catfish. Take advantage of the large lake and rent a pontoon boat for the day. Waterfront cabins and lodge accommodations are also available for overnight accommodations.

800/633-3341

CATCHABLE TROUT

Catchable trout is an extremely popular program with Illinois anglers, especially in the fall and spring when 36 locations throughout Illinois are stocked. More than 60,000 trout, each about 10-11 inches in length, fill the waterways. Depending on the depth of the water and the surroundings, fly-fishing for trout is possible in some lakes as well.

For more information regarding the catchable trout program or for questions about Illinois fishing, call the Illinois Department of Natural Resources at 1-800-ASKFISH or visit its Web site at <http://dnr.state.il.us>.

Hook the bait, cast the reel and pull in the excitement. Fishing in Illinois is guaranteed to be a huge catch. Relaxing days of fishing on the river or reservoir are just a phone call and a short drive away.

For detailed information on fishing and other events and attractions across Illinois, or to plan a customized trip, call an Illinois Travel Counselor at 1-800-2CONNECT (TTY: 1-800-406 418) or visit the Illinois tourism Web site at www.enjoyillinois.com.

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The Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), Bureau of Tourism, works to promote Illinois as a travel destination, thereby enhancing the state's economic development climate and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Illinois.

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